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AUTHOR Glimps, Blanche Jackson; Jones, Virginia
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ABSTRACT

This paper proposes that a collaborative program between industry and institutions of higher education during a period of industry and business downsizing, streamlining, and restructuring could result in the recruitment and retraining of potential teachers from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Such a program would follow a traditional teacher education model, but the students would be organized into cohorts. Recruits would be required to have a bachelor's degree in a "certifiable" subject area and to successfully complete an introductory course on the teaching profession including field experience in the classroom. The mid-career preservice teachers would receive peer support through the cohort approach as well as through transition workshops and special adult orientation sessions. Individual firms might provide scholarships and fellowships. Similar models have been successful in training retired military personnel as teachers and in implementing collaborative retooling efforts of companies. (Contains 18 references.) (JB)

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A MODEL FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF TEACHERS FROM UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS

paper presented at the Fourth Annual Minority Teacher Recruitment Symposium,
"Linkages to Minority Recruitment"
September 11, 1995,
School of Education,
Georgia Southern University
Savannah, Georgia

by

Blanche Jackson Glimps, Ph.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Kentucky Christian College
Grayson, Kentucky

and

Virginia Jones, Ed.D.
Chair, Education Unit
Marygrove College
Detroit, Michigan

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The youth population in the United States is on the rise. The number of persons under the age of 18 will increase from 64 million in 1990 to 67 million in the year 2000. Projected to grow throughout the 1990's and, by 1998, surpassing the 1971 peak is enrollment in public schools (Morris, 1994). The student population in public schools is becoming increasingly more diverse (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1994; Quality Education for Minorities Project, 1990). As an example, the percentage of African Americans enrolled in grades 1-12 increased from 14.8 percent in 1970 to 16.5 percent in 1990. The percentage of Hispanics decreased from 14.8 percent in 1970 to 11.6 in 1990. The percentage of Asian/Pacific Islanders increased approximately 158 percent from 1976 to 1990. By 2020, 12 states plus the District of Columbia will have half of the nation's 64 million "minority" youth population as residents (Hodgkinson, 1990). Increasingly located in central city schools, which also have the worst teacher shortages and, consequently, with the most underqualified new hires are children in poverty and children from ethnic minority backgrounds (Oakes, 1987).

The previously described surge in enrollment will require state and local governments to hire more teachers. However, a serious shortage currently exists in the numbers of teachers from ethnically diverse backgrounds. These shortages have reached crisis proportions. In 1990, according to the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (1994), the percentages of African American and Hispanic public elementary and secondary teachers were 9.2 and 3.1 percent respectively. One reason for the shortage of teachers from diverse backgrounds is the declining college enrollment rates among this population of students. For African Americans, postsecondary enrollment decreased from

9.4 percent in 1976 to 8.9 percent in 1990. For Asian Pacific Islanders the increase ranged from 1.8 percent in 1976 to 4.0 percent in 1990.

Many students from ethnically diverse backgrounds do not clearly recognize the connection between schooling and careers, although they often aspire to careers that require college degrees. Many students from historically under-represented groups lack information and counseling on the things to do in high school that will qualify them for college (Blackwater Associates, 1989). There are also those students of great potential who have had inadequate preparation in public schools, who lack an adequate understanding of the prerequisites and requirements of a college education.

Those persons from diverse backgrounds who do attend college do not select teaching as a major. Approximately 85 percent of teacher education students are European Americans, seven percent are African Americans, four percent are Hispanics, one percent is Native Americans, and less than one percent is Pacific Islanders (AACTE 1994). The total percentage of "minorities" who received Bachelor's degrees in the field of education changed -26.8 percent between 1981-92. This figure represents a -11.0 percent change for Hispanics, -45.0 for African Americans, 14.9 percent for American Indians, and -36.9 percent for nonresident aliens (Minorities in Higher Education, 1994). Figures for individuals who earn a Master's degree in the field of education show a similar pattern of decline. There was a -4.7 percent change in the total Masters degrees earned by "minorities during 1981-92. The percent of change by ethnic groups included 0.2 for Hispanics, -25.5 for African Americans, 22.5 for Asian Americans, 0.9 for American Indians, and 6.1 for nonresident aliens. This suggests that most teachers for the classrooms

of the year 2000 will be from European backgrounds. To reverse this situation, creative means must be explored to attract into teaching individuals who are from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Industry is a potential source for the recruitment of teachers.

Industry in particular has experienced significant downsizing of business and workforce reductions. Described by the euphemism downsizing is the past business activity of employee "layoffs." Unemployed persons represented seven percent of the population in 1992-93. Job losers represented at least 56 percent of the total unemployed population. Over the same period, job leavers represented about 10 percent of the total unemployed population. At least four percent of the civilian labor force were job losers. This compares with .8 percents who were job leavers (Monthly Labor Review, 1994). It is significant that 14 percent of the unemployed were African Americans, 11 percent were Hispanics, and six percent were European Americans.

Monthly Labor Review (1994) reports that, during 1993, the manufacturing industry had the largest job losses in the transportation equipment industry (down 82,000). This industry has lost 280,000 jobs since early 1989, with most of the recent reductions occurring mainly in aircraft and parts. Over that period, cut from full time employment were 1 out of four jobs in the aircraft industry. Instruments is another durable goods industry that lost more than 40,000 jobs in each of the last two years. Apparel, paper, and chemical industries also had employment declines of 35,000, 11,000 and 15,000 respectively. Jobs in the federal government, as a service producing sector, declined in 1993. Thirty thousand of the job losses were in Department of Defense civilian workers who took buyouts or early retirements associated with military base closures and

downsizing. Over a two year period, there has been a total job loss of 83, 000 in the Federal Government.

Higher Education also contributes to the growing numbers of persons who are unemployed. As an example, the growth of science has slowed in recent decades. Fewer students choose to go on to graduate schools and research careers in Science. Growth in the nation's total expenditures on research and development has been slow since 1985, with federal funding declining in the early 1990's (Keoles, 1995). Despite the decline, universities are preparing more scientists than can be employed within institutions of higher education, corporations, government, and industry (Goodstein, 1995). This declined financial funding has assisted in creating a pool of unemployed professional scientist.

One answer to the human effects of downsizing, streamlining, and restructuring is to retrain the labor force to work different jobs. Given this situation, a model of collaboration between industry and institutions of higher education, designed to increase the number of teachers from ethnically diverse backgrounds, could assist in alleviating the teacher shortage crisis. Affiliation or supportive and collaborative relationships with industry can produce a pool of potential teachers who are mature, diverse and experienced. Such individuals would bring a special emphasis and perspective into elementary and secondary classrooms. An alliance between industry and higher education could achieve one or more of the following specific goals:

--Attract talent from a wider pool of applicants and thus improve the quality of teachers

--Diversify the teaching force in terms of age, ethnicity, gender and experience, particularly at a time of declining college-age enrollments

--Assist out-placement in industries which are "downsizing" and seeking productive and available new opportunities for personnel who are being outplaced

--Enable laid-off workers to pursue personally rewarding and socially useful new careers (Powell, 1991).

Basic Program Characteristics

Believing that the existing process of teacher training has been inadequate to satisfy demands for more teachers, from ethnically diverse backgrounds, produces significant transformation in the existing paradigm that shape and control who enters teacher education program and how training will occur. Actualization of this belief requires a paradigm shift or fundamentally restructuring the teacher recruitment and training process. If colleges are to be successful, their ability to deliver relevant training to workers whose skills need upgrading for second careers will be of critical importance, and will require rethinking of what the outcome of training should be. Colleges can then create new and alternative methods of recruiting and training teachers. Such teacher education programs would have close relationships with schools, certification agencies, and industrial organizations. The program design would follow a traditional teacher education model. As an example, at a minimum the program would provide coursework leading to certification, classroom observations, practicums, and student teaching field experiences. The program would differ in being organized along a cohort model. This model would

allow students to develop collaborative team relationships with future professionals at the earliest stage of their professional preparation. The cohort approach would minimize the sense of isolation and provide a supportive learning team. Finally, flexible programming is a key characteristic of the program. Afternoons, evenings, and weekends, to help facilitate the process of becoming a teacher would be optimal times to offer courses.

Recruitment Process

Research on programs for college graduates making mid-career transitions into teaching provide a model useful in establishing recruitment relationship with both industry and labor unions. Crow, Levine and Nager (1990) conducted a study of second career teachers at Bank Street College of Education. They found three distinct types of career changers that they called the homecomers, the converted and the unconverted. The homecomers had always wanted to go into teaching, but had deferred their dream because of some pressing reason. They tended to imbue teaching with "the positive qualities they had not found in their previous work." For those who converted, a major life event had caused them to reassess their current situation and decide to change to teaching. The unconverted, who tended to be interested more in educational policy issues than in teaching children, did not remain in teaching. The group of "homecomers" and "converted" career changers are ideal potential teacher candidates.

What is the best way to recruit such prospects into teaching? The most effective way of recruiting would seem to be through established relationships with particular companies. Schedule a meeting with company administrators, who are in charge of personnel, to seek endorsements of the program. This relationship would allow institutions

of higher education to have immediate access to names of potential candidates. The company's "reduction in labor forces" interview would provide the opportunity to discuss alternative work plans and provide information about the teacher certification program. Degree of voluntary services to the children and youth segment of the population could be an indicator of prime candidates for second career as teachers. Records of active involvement with scouting, sports, or other youth related activities suggest individuals who would find rewarding a career in teaching.

Guidelines for Selecting Candidates

Definitive criteria for selecting candidates would include at least a Bachelor's Degree in a subject area labeled as "certifiable" by the state and marketable within schools. Requiring at least a Bachelor's Degree assures the completion of coursework for content areas as well as general education courses. A conscious choice and desire to teach, a love of children or youth, as well as an interest in serving society constitutes other criteria for selection.

Transcripts, requested from potential candidates and reviewed by the certification officer, are the sources of information about the requisite credits for certification and the "certifiable" subject area. Approved by content area advisors is the summary of college credit for the "certifiable" area identified by the certification officer. This would help to confirm the completion of the required content and general education related coursework. Conduct a personal interview with candidates after a decision has been made about the status of the transcript. A team approach to candidate selection is beneficial. A classroom supervisor, a university faculty member, the director of directed teaching, and a school

administrator would constitute an interview team. Their purpose would be to determine whether or not candidates have personal characteristics that lead to good teaching. A final component of the selection process would be the successful completion of a course on the "Teaching Profession." This course would involve an in-depth study of the intricacies of the field of teaching as well as extensive field hours in the classroom exposed to the realities of the profession. This early exposure to the dynamics and realities of the field of education and the classroom would assist individuals in making informed decisions as to whether or not they find teaching to be a personally enjoyable profession. The experience would allow the option of terminating the program prior to a heavy investment of time and money.

Teacher Education Program Design

Newly admitted students should receive extensive academic advising and career planning services. Mandated by State Departments of Education are the actual courses which candidates take. Realistic expectations about course content are essential in order that these students succeed in their second career program. It is crucial that coursework help prospective teachers to understand the total education system and lead teachers to feel empowered in their role. Coursework that focuses on the pedagogy of their subject matter would be most useful to these students. In other words, combined with coursework acquired in their specialized subject area are methods coursework in order to understand how to teach the subject. These courses would provide training in the curriculum components deemed indispensable for entry into the classroom. The curriculum of institutions of higher education should assist students in generalizing skills and talents used in one context to a classroom setting. Course discussion would help students explore the

similarities and differences between their first career and their desired second career in teaching. Each methods course would have a developmental observation component to allow students to move from observations, to tutoring under a classroom supervisor, to taking over small groups, to taking over the entire class.

Multiple levels of supervision and exposure to a variety of points of views about teaching are important aspects of program design. Regular communication between the classroom supervisor, the university faculty member, and the student is essential to provide cohesion and coherence for the students. Each member of this trio represents different perspectives. These differences can be an asset as well as a challenge. Recognition of the need for communication between partners assures program success.

The few research studies conducted on mid-career programs and interviews with program directors concur that mid-career pre-service teachers need a tremendous amount of personal support (Powell, 1991). Institutions that recruit large numbers of nontraditional age students are ideal sites for second career potential teachers. This type of student body would provide peers who understand the dynamics involved in combining college degree programs with home, families and other aspects of life for work established adults. These sites provide a natural environment of support and peer networking for older students. Transition workshops and special adult orientation sessions help to ensure their retention as nontraditional students return to college. Faculty trained in teaching adult learners or nontraditional students would conduct these workshops.

The program would differ in being organized as a cohort model where groups of students begin the teacher training program together within a timeline for completion of

the certificate. The model allows for compressed scheduling during mainly week-ends and summers. The cohort approach provides a coordinator who develops and schedules sequences of courses, assigns faculty, provides on site registration, and coordinates all other activities.

Encouraged are collegial study teams intended to stress active participation of the learner and to enhance cooperative learning experiences. Meeting with students in cohort teams would provide another means of retention, peer support, and faculty mentoring. Opportunities to establish a mentor program to help readjust to college, to talk about personal and academic challenges, to brainstorm strategies for resolution, and to establish peer tutoring services, are each available through a cohort model. After graduation from the program and during the first years of teaching, cohort members can provide continued levels of support to each other that could decrease attrition from the teaching field. Institutions of higher education could allow faculty members to also serve as mentors to first year teachers in order to facilitate retention in the profession.

Celebration of different rites of passage as students proceed through the program also assists in building community, strengthening morale, providing individual support, and recognizing levels of achievement towards the long term goal of becoming teachers.

Financial Assistance

Economics is the bottom line. The need to attract members of ethnically diverse groups into teaching is particularly great and merits a special effort on the part of public and private agencies. Individual firms could provide scholarships and fellowships to promising candidates with declared intentions of going into teaching. Courses that are not

related to the company's business could be included in firms more flexible tuition reimbursement. Challenge grants to colleges and universities designed to support the transition of second career professionals into teaching could be offered by firms and private foundations. Creation of an unofficial financial aid specialist among members of the education department would enhance opportunities to get to know students and to assist them in their efforts to finance their education.

Employment Possibilities

A close connection between the teacher preparation program and school systems for employment as well as student teaching is important in order to assist program graduates in locating employment. It is important that the local market be surveyed to determine supply and demands concerning areas of teaching. It is detrimental to morale to invite students to participate in programs for which there will not be jobs available.

Models for Success

As colleges begin to retrain professionals for second careers in teaching, there are useful models of success. As an example, there is a growing trend for military retirees to become teachers (Gursky, 1992). Officers, in particular, possess education, training and experience that would be advantageous in the classroom. In many areas, training to prepare them for second careers in teaching is available. Under the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support's (DANTES) Troops-to-Teacher program, 65 million dollars is available to place separated members of the armed forces and displaced employees of the Defense and Energy Departments into certification programs (Education

Daily, 1994). Rockwell International has a similar program to recruit its retirees as secondary science and math teachers (Minton-Eversole, 1991).

Models on retooling workers within institutions of higher education are also available. Large and small companies have developed retooling programs with educational institutions to upgrade or develop the skills of workers. Comunity college are leading this effort. Westchester Community College retrains dislocated workers at their Professional Development Center (Westchester Community College President's Report, 1993). The Displaced Worker Center in Oakland Community College devises programs for workers who don't have much time to realign themselves for the job market (Van Dine, 1995).

Conclusion

Dramatic changes and demands impact local communities, states, and the nation as society stand on the threshold of the 21st Century. Reform and restructuring of models of recruitment for teaching personnel can contribute to increased momentum in bringing teachers from ethnically diverse backgrounds into classrooms. Linkage between industry and institutions of higher education is a collaborative model that initiates systemic change within the teaching force. A commitment to communicate and collaborate from the leaders of these agencies, as well as with the local school district, is necessary for success.

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